THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

JANUARY, 1850.

Original Papers.

THE ARAB OF THE CITY,

BEING THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LONDON THIEF.

THE lives of "the lawless and disobedient" reveal, for the most part, experiences of peculiar and painful interest. The love of excitement, which usually impels vicious natures to the perpetration of crime, often invests its career also with an undue and dangerous attraction. There is a mystery of gloom around the haunts of guilt, which provokes popular curiosity, and it is not easy always to suppress sympathy toward those who, reared as outcasts from society, have revenged themselves as its outlaws; and, amidst reckless daring and romantic adventures, have wrung out a wretched and precarious subsistence in the service of sin, to perish at last under its terrible retribution.

There is a spurious and criminal literature in our country, which panders to popular profligacy, by rioting amidst scenes of vulgar vice, and depicting with congenial and guilty glee, the most atrocious villanies. We must beware of investing vice with distinction, or confounding compassion for the criminal with sympathy for his crimes. It is a mischievous mistake, which fails to distinguish between the deformity of sin, and philanthropy towards its victim; and would dignify the daring of depraved enterprise into heroic fame.

The following singular narrative is submitted to our readers, alike as a faithful exponent of vice, and a record of remarkable conversion from its snares. It is a *genuine autobiography of a London thief*, and there are good reasons for confiding in the authenticity and fidelity of its details. The author is permitted to submit his statements strictly in his own words. We shall only intersperse his narrative

with occasional reflections, where it may seem necessary to call attention to his facts, or to impress the lessons which he preaches. The course of these sketches will sufficiently explain their occasion. If we descend with him to scenes of infamy, it is only to unveil the odiousness of vice, and to magnify that mercy which redeemed him out of the "horrible pit." The design of the narrative will be frustrated, if it do not prove that Christianity is the only true corrective of crime, by renewing the hearts of its victims; and we present this witness to our readers, as one among many similar trophies of *the blessed success of* RAGGED SCHOOLS.

CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST THEFT; OR, THE BEGINNING OF CRIME.

ABOUT the middle of February, 1838, I was at work in London with my uncle, who is a butcher, carrying on business at Pimlico. I was then at the age of fourteen years. Being at a distance from my home, and having got associated with several lads of the same age as myself, and feeling uneasy at my being under the power of my uncle and aunt, I thought of running away from them, and going to Birmingham or Manchester, which towns I had heard and read about. This plan, for a period of a month or two, was continually in my mind, but my thoughts were alternately at home—What would my parents think of me? what would my friends think and say of me? and how could I go there without money or friends there to receive me? But such were the impressions of the plan which I thought of, that I resolved to forsake all friends, my character, and my all, to obtain the gratification of seeing those above-named towns. I resolved to possess myself of about £12. 10*s*., which I had to receive for my uncle. I so managed it that I put my best clothes on under my usual dress, received the money, and flung the receipt book over into Grosvenor Square. In the dark part of the Square I pulled off my working dress, called a cab, and was driven to Drury Lane Theatre. I witnessed the performance, but I was in dreadful agony of mind. I was afraid to look around lest I should be seen; I thought of the tears which my mother would shed, the anguish of my father, the fury of my uncle—all seemed to come upon me at once. I thought of returning back that night; then I would think what a coward I was; thus my conscience would accuse me. That night I slept at a public-house opposite the pit entrance of the theatre; here I slept three nights, when a circumstance happened rather contrary to my expectations. The money I received on behalf of my uncle was £12. 10*s*., a cheque for £6, and the rest in gold. I went on the fourth day with the cheque to Messrs. Drummonds and Co.,

at Charing Cross, for payment. I was questioned closely as to my possession of the cheque, and on my prevaricating answers, I was detained for some time. My uncle had previously stopped its payment, and ordered the bearer to be detained. I was taken to the station-house, my uncle was sent for, and I was taken before a magistrate. I was remanded for a week; my uncle in the interim had communicated with my parents, and on my next appearance at the court I was admonished by the magistrate, and discharged. All the money found on me on my apprehension had been given to my uncle. I was now pennyless, homeless, friendless—what was I to do? I was too young for hard work—I could not go home—I had been a thief, been in a station-house, been before a magistrate twice—I had been in prison. I then thought that there was only another step I could reach, which was transportation.

(To be continued.)

LOOK TO THE FOUNDATION, AND PERSEVERE.

BY OLD FATHER THAMES.

If the end of the old year was a proper time for a review of the past, the beginning of the new year is an excellent season for a glance at the future. What in the former we have discovered to be amiss, in the latter we may haply be able to amend; and thus, by a new graft on the old stock of time, obtain better and more abundant fruit. This reasoning is too plain to be gainsayed, but if it is to be practically adopted, there is not a moment to lose. Few, very few, know the value of the passing hour. Seasons are rolling onward, the world is fading, life is shortening, and eternity is approaching.

"When flying Time is on his track,
An angel cannot bring him back."

No, nor ten thousand angels, for he outstrips the white winged hosts of heaven in speed. To profit by the company of time, we must go with him, for could we travel with the lightning, we should never be able to overtake him. Let us try from the past to get good for the future, by dwelling a little on the motto I have chosen, Look to the foundation, and persevere.

In the years of my childhood, when I little thought that my brow would ever be graven with wrinkles, or my head covered with grey hairs, I was once amusing myself in building a card house, but so unsuccessfully, that, time after time, the frail tenement fell before it was completed. My father happening to be a witness of my disappointment, whispered in my ear, "Look to the foundation, and persevere." I did look to it, and built it doubly strong, and with such additional care, that an edifice of six stories, to my great delight, soon

rewarded my perseverance. Age may learn much from childhood. "Look to the foundation, and persevere," is a piece of advice that is as suitable to a man of seventy, as to a child of seven.

We are all of us builders, and very many build as thoughtlessly as I did my card house in the days of my childhood. What is the reason that our "*châteaux en Espagne*," our castles in the air, afford us so little comfort? Simply because we do not look to their foundation. If Old Father Thames could only engrave deeply on the hearts of his younger friends this one piece of advice, "Look to the foundation, and persevere," he would have little fear, either for the success of Ragged Schools, or for the welfare of any other well-founded undertaking of benevolence; for they would then see, and apply the wisdom of the wise man, "which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock;" and the folly of the foolish man, "which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." The Ragged School enterprise, if I at all understand it, is no Quixotic adventure—no unattainable project—but a sound and practicable undertaking of Christian benevolence; its objects being no more nor less than this—looking upwards for Heavenly aid, and around for human help, to bring "destitute, neglected children and youth under moral and religious influence, to draw out the fellow-feelings of the heart, to curb the low passions of human nature, and to show the poorest of our fellow-creatures that there are those who think of them, care for them, and desire to do them good."

It is not sufficiently remembered by us, that all we have, has been bestowed upon us by our heavenly Father, and

> "That, when we give the utmost of our store,
> We only give what God gave us before."

I said, that we were all builders, but that many built unwisely. An unwise builder is alluded to in the fourteenth chapter of St. Luke, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish."

This is a striking picture, and well worthy the best attention of projectors of all kinds. It is useless to begin even a good work, without a prospect of being able to persevere. "But others there are who, before beginning to build, count the cost, and having collected their materials, and laid their foundations deep and broad, go on to rear their structure, indifferent to more tempting schemes and sublimer enterprises subsequently suggested. The man who provides a home for a poor neighbour, is a greater benefactor of the poor, than he who lays the foundation of a stately almshouse, and never finishes a single apartment. The persevering teacher, who guides one child into the saving knowledge of Christ, and leads him on to established habits of piety, is a more useful man than his friend

who gathers in a room-full of ragged children, and after a few weeks of waning zeal, turns them all adrift on the streets again. The patriot, who set his heart on abolishing the slave trade, and after twenty years of rebuffs and revilings, of tantalized hope and disappointed effort, at last succeeded, achieved a greater work than if he had set afloat all possible schemes of philanthropy, and then left them, one after the other, to sink or swim. So short is life, that we can afford to lose none of it in abortive undertakings; and once we are assured that a given work is one which it is worth our while to do, it is true wisdom to set about it instantly, and once we have begun it, it is true economy to finish it."

Having seen an advertisement in the *Times*, setting forth that the foundation stone of a Ragged School would be laid on the morrow, at Hoxton, I shaped my course in that direction, a little before the time appointed. The name of the square mentioned in the newspaper had escaped my memory, so that I had to seek it out. Ragged Schools are not usually built in such squares as those of Hanover, Berkeley, Russell, Grosvenor, and Cavendish; and, therefore, I was not at all disappointed to find the one in question in a neighbourhood laying but a very humble claim to gentility. It was a place where a school was wanted. The company came and took their seats on the forms provided, under a temporary tent-like covering, and Old Father Thames stood in as retired a spot as he could find, talking with a Superintendent of a Ragged School, until all was ready.

There were the company under the cloth and ropes! there was the great stone suspended by its cord and chain! and there stood behind it, on the platform, the noble Chairman of the Ragged School Union Committee, surrounded with a few Christian-hearted, eloquent-tongued men. Prayer and praise, and effective addresses, followed each other, and the ceremony of laying the stone was decorously performed.

While these matters were proceeding, a group on the outside, who seemed by their ragged appearance to be very fit candidates for admission into the school when completed, were doing their best to obtain a peep through the awning; but a man inside, who, no doubt, considered it a part of his duty to do so, manifested much zeal in preventing them. "Let them alone," said I, "let them alone; their peeping will hurt nobody, and it may do them good." Why, bless them! when I looked at their ragged backs and eager faces, so far from preventing them from peeping, I would, if I could have had my own way, have made holes on purpose for them to peep through; and the more so because, just at the time, Lord Ashley was explaining and vindicating the term "Ragged Schools." "We take the scholars in rags," said he, "but we let them out clothed. We receive them heathens, but send them forth Christians." I stood till my feet were almost as cold as stones, but my heart was "all in a glow." "This is the sort of work that will stand," said I to the Superintendent near me, "for it is built on a good foundation. These works of Christian love are seeds which will bring forth an abundant harvest, when the Christian hands that scattered them are motionless in the grave."

I am fond of musing in the Abbey of Westminster, among the monuments of the good and great. There lie the mouldered remains of kings, and monks, and knights, and bards—for all that is earthly must be brought low.

"Time spreads alike his shadowy wings,
O'er monks, and bards, and knights, and kings."

The devotional influence of a cathedral, the solemnity of the tombs, and the purity of cold, clear, white marble, harmonize wondrously well together; and, perhaps, for an old man, I am more accessible to these influences than many; but after putting the most favourable construction on the tombs of departed heroes, it grieves me that their renown should not rest on a firmer foundation than that of selfish glory. I should like to play the letter-cutter, if I could with truth, and, after chipping away the "victory," and the "covered with glory," from many a monumental inscription, chisel, in the place thereof, the words, "He laid the foundation stone of a Ragged School." This would be a more homely, but it would also be a much more honourable inscription. Oh that we all looked more than we do to the foundation of the things in which we engage! It seems the great business of time to overturn the statues of ambition, to deface the inscriptions of pride, and to humble human vanity. He seems to say derisively—

"Pile up your marble, crest it with a crown,
Gild it with gold, and I will pull it down."

Who is there among the residents of "Fayre London Citie," or indeed among those who pay it an occasional visit, who has not stood thoughtfully on that bridge of bridges, called London Bridge, which spans the noble river whose name I bear; musing now on the flowing tide below its goodly arches, and now on the living stream of throbbing pulses and beating hearts, flowing two ways at once, between the city and the borough? I have mused there at mid-day, when the sun glittered on the sparkling waters; and at midnight, when the lights of Southwark Bridge were reflected in long spiral streams of fire in the current below. The coal barges were as black patches on the almost inky waters. The night air was bleak and cold, even to the well-clad, flannel-waistcoated, great-coated citizen, who happened to be abroad. What must it have been, then, to the ill-fed, and the ill-clad? The pale-faced, shivering outcasts of crime, and the poor ragged lads, whose hapless destitution and reckless habits and dishonesty had made homeless, might be seen, here and there, reclining in the comfortless recesses of the bridge. Bitter is the bread, and hard is the stony couch of crime, but do you ask me whose fault it was that these wretched outcasts were what they were? You are safe in proposing the question, for I speak of years gone by; but should you see such outcasts now, and ask me, Who is to blame? I reply—*you!* unless, according to your ability, you have done your utmost to prevent the guilt and wretchedness you deplore. It is a derisive mockery, a heartless affectation of humanity, to pity the misery you make no effort to relieve. One piece of gold, one silver

shilling, nay, one copper coin, cast into the treasury of Christian philanthropy, for the benefit of the erring children of ignorance, crime, and destitution, outweighs in worth a thousand exclamations of unembodied sympathy.

I feel that I must again return to this subject, having much more to say upon it than I now have the time to put on paper. I must again call on the supporters of Ragged Schools, to look to the foundation of their support, and to persevere. I must once more take my readers with me to London Bridge, that I may urge upon them the claims of the destitute—pointing them to the best of all foundations, set forth in God's most holy word, on which whosoever that builds wisely—

> Will see in peril's darkest hour,
> "The rainbow hope arise,
> A bridge of glory o'er the grave,
> That bends before the skies."

RAGGED SCHOOL PROGRESS.

One is often asked, "Well, how go on your Ragged Schools?" It is a question easier asked than answered. We generally say, "Oh! very well;" but, on reflection, almost think we have deceived our friend, for in many ways they do not go on well at all. It is up-hill work, and if all were not at their posts, pushing, and pressing, and working, and striving, the stone that has been rolled up-hill, with so much care and toil, soon comes rolling down again. The fact is, we struggle against the stream, and if we are not very careful will soon be carried back by it. Let us, then, be ever on the watch; and warn, and direct, and instruct our friends and fellow-workers in every possible way.

And, now, let us first call attention to the want of punctuality in attendance of the voluntary teachers. It is a complaint we too often hear, "We have so few teachers, we don't know what to do;" or, "Teachers are so irregular, we are obliged to close the doors against many boys who are anxious to come."

Hear what one Superintendent says in his Quarterly Report:—

"There are numbers, varying from ten to twenty-five, shut out from our School on Sunday Evening, for the want of teachers, and there have been as many as ninety-two taken in, when only six teachers have been there."

Another writes thus:—

"Voluntary teachers are much wanted. There is a large number of children excluded each evening for want of teachers."

Another says:—

"We have to lament the little interest taken in the cause by those who should be foremost in it, causing us to be often without the means of giving instruction in consequence of the want of teachers; much to the disgrace of many who say they love the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet do little or nothing in his service."

Surely this ought not so to be; surely there are many who, on hearing

of such a state of things, will be ready to say, "Let me try to help– let me at once go to the nearest Ragged School, and try to help them. If I can do no more, I can keep the door, or help to keep order, or assist others in teaching poor ignorant children, in some way that God in his providence may point out to me." It is an old saying, "Where there's a will there's a way." May many have the will, and God will show them the way!

Next, as to funds :—

Many schools are impeded by debt. At the present time, out of forty-nine schools reported in one evening, nineteen were in debt, amounting in all to about £500. Were it not for the want of funds, Industrial Classes would be at once set going in many, and food given to the most necessitous.

We find in the Reports above-mentioned such remarks as these, "No Industrial Class for want of funds;" "Industrial Class to begin as soon as funds will allow;" "An Industrial Class for boys much needed," and so on. As twenty-six of the forty-nine schools reported as above are yet without Industrial Classes, even for teaching girls to sew, we conclude it is owing to want of funds and nothing else. It is sad to think that, out of above three thousand children attending the above schools during the day or week, only about eight hundred are under industrial training of any kind.

But let us now glance at some instances of encouragement. In nearly all the schools, improvement has taken place in the habits and morals of the children. If they do not learn much, the little they do learn seems to do them good. The parents, too, seem, in many cases, to begin to appreciate the good done to their offspring.

Let us copy a few simple statements to show these facts. One Superintendent says:—

"At an examination of the whole school, held in August, when the Superintendent gave ten prizes, a little girl, who could not read when she first entered the school, gained the best prize, given for proficiency in Scripture History."

Another writes thus:—

"In some instances there has been a decided improvement, inasmuch as several children have improved in habits of cleanliness, etc., and become scholars in regularly organized Sabbath Schools, and their parents (through them no doubt) have become attendants on the public worship of God."

Another says:—

"There is a decided improvement among the children in cleanliness, order, etc. The parents of many of the children have called and expressed their thankfulness for the efforts we have made."

A City Missionary writes in one Report:—

"I can confidently state a decided improvement in one girl, named H—— B——, who was once the pest of the school, but now of late the delight of the same. This improvement has been noticed for the last four months, and still continues."

Another Report says:—

"Several instances of improvement have occurred, one of a specially important nature."

Another says:—

"C—— N—— came to school about two years ago, destitute, and almost silly. Has been tolerably regular in his attendance. He made his appearance a few days ago, after an absence of two or three months, and said he had been at work at 7*s.* a week, and having mentioned to his master that he should like to attend his old school, it so pleased him, that an agreement was drawn up and submitted to the schoolmaster by his employer, wherein he agrees to engage him for four years at the following wages—first year, 9*s.* a week; second, 10*s.* 6*d.*; third, 13*s.* 6*d.*; fourth, 18*s.* This boy is allowing part of his earnings to his mother."

Another Superintendent says:—

"One lad has just gone from us to a good situation at 6*s.* a week."

Another:—

"General and progressive improvements, sufficiently satisfactory to encourage the Committee to persevere, under the blessing of God, with the work they have in hand."

Another says:—

"The parents of several of the girls have expressed their thankfulness at the improvement in their children."

The Agar Town Report:—

"Many evidently pay more attention to cleanliness, and evince much anxiety to improve in secular knowledge."

The Superintendent of Hopkin's Street School states:—

"Many instances are known where lads having obtained situations by the influence of the Superintendents and teachers, are satisfactorily discharging their duties, and grateful for their obligations to the Ragged Schools, as the only thing that rescued them from want. The same is the case in reference to several girls. Instances are also known where parents, previously immoral, have become regular attenders on Divine worship on the Lord's day; and whose homes, once filthy, are now clean; while the children of these parents, once too well known for disorder and idleness, are now cheerful and industrious."

The Edward Mews Report states:—

"The Teachers report a great improvement in the behaviour of both adults and children."

The Bere Street Report says:—

"Many of the children attend church by their own desire; among them, one or two of those lately the most unruly of all, but now behaving as well as any. The Boys' Industrial Classes also are effecting an improvement; many a ragged garment has been patched and made decent. Most of the boys have been thus benefited; they have been seen at work repairing their clothes, while attending a fruit stall."

The Brewers' Court Superintendent says:—

"A decided improvement on Sabbath days—very quiet and orderly."

The Superintendent of Grotto Passage School writes thus:—

"Many instances could be given wherein young men and boys, of vitiated and abandoned character, have been so far reclaimed as to render themselves eligible as candidates for emigration, or of being recommended to situations. Improvements of this nature are most apparent in the Refuge Department, where the lads spend the whole of their time at school, kept under strict surveillance, fed, clothed, and trained in religious, moral, intellectual, and industrial instruction."

The Stepney School Report states:—

"Several (both males and females) have since their admission into our school, been convinced of sin, and induced to leave off their sinful ways."

The Spicer Street Superintendent says:—

"The improvement among the children is general and satisfactory."

The New Pye Street Report has this passage:—

"Thieves have become honest; the ragged and dirty—tidy and clean; the idle—industrious."

The Twig Folly Report states:—

"We find a marked improvement in the conduct of some of the worst, and have great reason to think we are doing some good."

In the Exeter Buildings School, Chelsea, also, (not to mention several others,) improvement in both boys and girls is evident. The girls are particularly fond of their teacher; and their parents, in many cases, very thankful for what is doing for them. About twenty girls and twelve boys now go once a month, with two of the lady visitors, to the Rev. Mr. Cadman's monthly service for children, at Park Chapel, and behave very well. Many subscribe to the clothing fund. Several girls and boys have been lately placed in situations, and are doing well.

Surely, in all this there is some encouragement for us to persevere, and not to "despise the day of small things."

May the God of all grace crown every effort to bless poor, ragged, destitute children, and open the hearts of those who have the means to help in this great work. W. L.

RAGGED SCHOOLS—Les Écoles en Haillons.

(Translated from the French.)

It is a Sunday night. You are sad, under the influence of a fit of misanthropy, and you are walking slowly in one of the muddy streets of London. Many times you have uttered the famous sentence by which you condemn yourself—"All men are wicked." It rains—the street is lonely and dark. You go along damp and blackened walls, seeking a shelter. On a sudden, a door is opened not far from you, and a ragged child comes out. You stop, for you have heard voices singing, and you ask yourself—Whence do they come? It is not a chapel, the entrance is too wretched; it is not a school,

for there are the voices of adults. You wish to know what it is, and you go in. You ascend a narrow staircase, at the top of which you see before you all the miseries, all the sufferings, and all the virtues which you can imagine. There you see vagrants, prostitutes, orphans, thieves, and a few devoted young men, some sweet girls, who consecrate their leisure to the education of these wretched beings, disinherited by nature and by man! It is a *Ragged School!* It is *l'école des haillons!* Many tears, many prayers, and many volumes of morals and philosophy are contained in these words. Well, you proceed—the room is divided in two by a wooden partition, with a platform at one end, from which the Superintendent can watch over all his pupils. On this platform there are about fifty children, under six years of age. You are overwhelmed with a strange feeling of sadness, while beholding these poor little creatures, whose delicate limbs are scarcely clothed with rags, and you think you see flowers covered with mud! You feel your heart stirred within you, when you see these rosy faces, hear these pure voices, and think that the greater part of these children have the street for bed and abode, and that they do not know a mother's love! They are the fruits of debauch—that spume of great cities. They awoke one morning with a smiling face under the pale sun of London, and since that day God alone knows what has been their food.—"*When they have no bread they sleep.*"

Yet, a little while, and those bright cheeks will lose their bloom; those angelic smiles will disappear, and premature depravity will fade those tender flowers, to break them soon after; or, perhaps, to-morrow, hunger and misery will put an end to their existence. What matters it? It will be one human being less, and that is all! No one will know it, except the young female teacher of the *Ragged School*, who will see one place vacant in the circle—and who will weep! These thoughts pain you, and you turn your eyes from these children, and direct your steps elsewhere. There are the girls. You see six circles of them, and in the centre of each a female teacher. The first is composed of little girls from seven to ten years of age; those of the second are from ten to twelve; and so on. You stop again near the last circle—those are prostitutes! You can trace on those faces of fifteen to twenty the most foul debauch. You understand that *gin* alone could thus wither those lips, deaden and stupify those eyes which stare at you. And what hoarse voices, what obscene words, what idiot laughs, strike your ears! And the oldest of those girls is twenty! Some of them hold little babes on their knees. Are they their own? You dare not ask—and you pass on. You get in the other part of the room. Here the teacher comes to you, to advise you to *take care of your pockets*; you have left vice for crime. You stop near one of those circles, and listen. A teacher is explaining the Gospel to those understandings, obliterated by misery and vice; some are laughing, others are knocking each other down, and a few are attentive. By dint of patience, the teacher often obtains from those uncultivated minds some strange words, which show that his efforts are not vain. "One night," says the Report of one of these schools, "we were reading that passage of the New Testament, where a woman fell at the feet of Christ, beseeching that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. When we came to the prayer which she addressed to Jesus, 'Lord, help me!' a young boy, who had many times let his head fall on the shoulder of his neighbour, exclaimed, 'Teacher, I will repeat that prayer when I have returned home, for I am in need of help. My father is almost blind, my mother is dead, I have no means of earning my subsistence, and I have eat nothing since yesterday!'"

The teacher's heart heaves, and his eyes fill with tears, when he hears

such words. He asks the child where he lives; then, when the school is over, he follows him to the damp vault, where his father is stretched on a little straw. He inquires about their situation, endeavours to give them some consolation, and does not leave them without affording relief. Sometimes, however, the teacher cannot even help a sickly scholar whom he visits; for he finds sitting near the bed a female, intoxicated, whom the child calls his mother, and to whom the generous youth durst not give anything, lest with it she should get more drink.

In the midst of the youths, from eighteen to twenty years old, (all of them clothed in rags,) composing one of the next circles, you behold with astonishment a man who may be from forty-five to fifty, with a sinister countenance, oblique looks, and huge form—he is one of the most assiduous scholars—he is one of the most dexterous thieves of London.

When the clock strikes eight, the superintendent requires silence. It is difficult to obtain this from an assemblage of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty scholars of this description. He patiently waits until the last cry has ceased—the last voice has hushed; then he gives out a hymn, which they sing; he addresses a few parting words to his pupils, of whom a great number will perhaps never come again; he pronounces aloud a prayer, which they repeat in a whisper, and the scholars return home, (those who have one,) some to the crowded hovels, where they will sleep all night—the greater number to the streets, seeking a stone step where they can rest their heads. Others go to their business. Their business? What can be the business of vagrant children? It is this. On Sunday, religious services are concluded about eight o'clock; well, leaving the *Ragged School*, they sometimes flock to the doors of churches and chapels, and there . . . . . they steal what they can.

But, perhaps you ask, what allurement can there be for such beings in that school? What are the means employed to secure their regular attendance at these *Ragged Schools?* Indeed, no other than meekness and patience. It is by the sole power of charity, of *love*, that those *parias* are induced to be assiduous and attentive. The generous teachers, who devote themselves to this work of humility, consecrate, most of them, that time which they would otherwise give to rest; then they act with so much meekness—they answer by so much kindness and patience to the words, so often vulgar, of these wretches, that they succeed in securing their affections. A young female teacher was speaking of God and his providence to her class, when she was interrupted by a little girl, who said, "I don't care for God; I don't love him; I don't love Christ; and I don't love you!" A murmur of disapprobation arose among her companions; they said that they loved their mistress, and that they were willing to share their bread with her. "And would not you do the same?" asked the young female to the child. "No," answered she. "Well," added the teacher, with tenderness, "I should be happy to share my bread with you, and if you don't love me, I love you, for I come every day a long distance to teach you!" The child could not resist words so tender—she threw herself in the arms of her whom she had offended, covering her with tears and kisses.

This is one example of the power of kindness; we could give a thousand, but the strongest proof that we can adduce as to the excellency of this system is, that, during the few years these *Ragged Schools* have been founded in London, their number has increased to eighty; that of the voluntary teachers to nine hundred, and the number of scholars to fifteen thousand.

Now, you may ask, what can be the object of these schools? Their object is to open those dark minds to the reflection, if not to the light

itself, of whatever is beautiful and good. These poor beings are the disinherited of nature and of man; we repeat it, most of them were born in the streets—they know no other home. Their mothers only gave them life—a sad present, which they only know through hunger and cold! They feed on the crumbs which fall in the mire through which they drag themselves. They learn nothing but evil; they respect nothing, love nothing, believe nothing. They are as ignorant of God as they are of their mother.—Ah! they are indeed disinherited; for all in them is left to any influence and impulse, whether the body, the mind, or the heart. Well, they enter the *Ragged School;* they hear hymns sung—that is already something for the heart. Then they are spoken to with kindness; perhaps for the first time do they hear a tender voice, and see a smile; perhaps for the first time do they feel that they have a heart, and understand that they can love! And do you think they will not come again? Do you think they can stop their ears against those voices which say, "Come unto us, you whom the world drives back, and we will love you?" Aye, and they do come again! Then they are taught to read, and they understand that they can know something—so much for the mind. Then, if they have been attentive and studious, they receive a blue ticket; when they have twelve of these they change them for a white; and when they have twelve white tickets they receive an article of clothing; so much for the body. This is surely a very small result; it is slender comfort for so many wants; but, nevertheless, it shows to those unhappy beings, that somebody in the wide world cares for them; it is a proof that they are not entirely forgotten. And besides, these are not the only fruits of such devotedness, of so generous efforts. Often some of these wretched women have come, with their faces bathed in tears, and asked the mild and kind young females who were teaching them, by what means they could become again respectable and respected as they? They have then been encouraged; they have been placed in asylums; care has been bestowed upon them, and some years after, they, in their turn, have come to these *Ragged Schools*, with a book in their hands, to impart to others the benefits which they had received.

When you have beheld these scenes, and have learned these details, you return to your abode, perhaps more sad than before, but fully convinced that all men are not wicked.—*La Réforme.*

In regard to the concluding sentence of this most interesting paper, we believe that every faithful Ragged School Teacher would be prepared to say, "We all had our conversation, in times past, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ."—[ED.]

A VISIT TO THE PERTH INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

A FEW years ago, when Ragged Schools were regarded as one of the novelties of the age, they were looked upon as necessary only in large towns, where the accumulating masses of humanity were congregated. It was believed, that there only could suitable materials be found, where the neglected portions of humanity had gathered like a bulky sediment, affording ample scope for the exercise of energy and enterprise. This, among other illusions, is being gradually dispelled, for in proportion as we become acquainted with the real state of society, will the fact be

established, that in every town containing a population of a few thousands, will a number of filthy and neglected children be found, sufficient to justify the establishment of a Ragged School. Hence, in the Island of Jersey, and in many of the small provincial towns, schools have been established, and no sooner have they been opened, than such numbers of ragged wanderers have presented themselves, as to be more than sufficient to fill the benches. In such cases, one would have thought, that at least from its novelty, the Ragged School would have become the favourite of the town; that the directors would soon have been burdened with an overflow of funds, and that many volunteers would have speedily come forward to labour in the neglected vineyard, and to vie with each other in striving to lift up to their proper position, these broken fragments of their little community.

But a recent visit to some of these provincial schools has left on our minds a different impression. As in London, so in the provinces, the promoters of Ragged Schools must labour amidst much forgetfulness, often trembling on the verge of uncertainty, as to whether they may be able to maintain a footing. In many instances, their only encouragement is derived from the manifest good they are accomplishing, and the gratitude shown by the poor outcasts for whom they have provided a refuge and a home.

As the next in age to Sheriff Watson's Schools in Aberdeen, we resolved to visit the Perth Schools of Industry. It was a pleasant afternoon in autumn, when we arrived within the precincts of the "fair city." On our approach to the little town, its position and appearance seemed to be such as would naturally suggest an idea at which we have already hinted. Quietly situated on the banks of the Tay, with a population not much larger than Greenwich and Deptford, surrounded by a wide expanse of land, laden with the fruits of its fertility—here and there were to be seen, encircled with lofty oaks and extensive pleasure-grounds, the princely mansions of the aristocracy, together with a large suburban population, who could vie with them in comfort, if not in wealth. Dwelling on the beauties of the surrounding scenery, which strangely contrasted with the scenes in London which we had previously witnessed, and taking what we saw as an index of its interior, we were tempted to exclaim, "Why should Ragged Schools be needed here? If the majority of these comfortable people are Christians—if they have even *tried* to do their duty—they will not have left an outcast on their streets, nor a houseless wanderer to feed or educate." But we forgot that Belgrave Square stands so near to Old Pye Street, and the wretched alleys of Marylebone to the princely mansions in Hyde Park. We were conducted to the Refuge by one of its most active supporters, whose position in that city enabled him to give to the world a pamphlet on "Juvenile Delinquency," for which the country owes him a debt of gratitude.

The building in which the Schools are held is granted free of expense, by the managers of King James the Sixth's Hospital. This is a rich foundation, made at the date of the Reformation, "from the numerous alterages in and about Perth, and by the king ordered to be administered by the ministers and elders, for the maintenance of all poor members of Christ's body, and the godly up-bringing of their offspring." Under this last clause, the managers give considerable sums for education, and apartments in their large edifice for schools.

The School was established in 1843, and since that time nearly a hundred boys have been trained and educated, most of whom were previously in a state of extreme destitution. Twenty-three were orphans, thirty-six fatherless, and ten without mothers. Beds are provided for

them in the establishment, so that they present the appearance of a large family, more than an ordinary school.

The master is a pious soldier, and as a healthful exercise for the boys, devotes a portion of each day to military gymnastics, in which they have made very great proficiency. The industrial departments consist of stone-breaking,* net-making, and knitting stockings. In the latter department, one boy, during the first year of the school, knitted forty pairs. The product of labour during six years has amounted to £100. One pleasing feature with which we were peculiarly struck, was their proficiency in Scripture knowledge. Scarcely in any National or British school have we seen among the children such a thorough acquaintance with the word of God. The order and cleanly appearance of the children gave the best of all evidence of the excellent manner in which the Institution is conducted. A large number have been apprenticed to trades, and, with very few exceptions, have given the greatest satisfaction to their employers. One boy, when admitted into the school, about five years since, could scarcely articulate a word. This is supposed to have arisen from ill-usage and exposure to cold and want; but on the day of our visit we heard him read several verses of Scripture with ease and fluency!

The expense of clothes, food, lodging, and education, for each child, does not amount to more than £8 per year, and yet we grieve to say, that the Institution has been so miserably supported, that there was a deficiency in its funds at the last Annual Meeting of £117, so that the directors have not only been hindered in their operations, but almost compelled to close the Institution. When will the respectable inhabitants of Perth learn to look at this matter in its true light, and consider that the whole amount of this debt is virtually theirs? On looking over the statement of subscriptions for last year, we only find *two* individual contributors to the amount of five pounds each, in the whole list! While £14 a year is being expended for punishing each child in the general prison of that city, apart from the expense of prosecution; and while, in the smaller town of Dumfries, £800 was raised in one year for the support of an Industrial School, the inhabitants of Perth are turning a deaf ear to the cry of the orphan and the outcast, leaving them to find a home in prison, or perish in their streets!

The Reaper's Corner.

OLD SCHOLARS' MEETING.

In every effort for the moral or spiritual improvement of mankind, the results are but partially seen. The faithful labourer walks more by faith than sight. The minister of the Gospel may have spent a long life in arduous and anxious labour, but it is very few of whom he can say, "this and that man were born there." Such is often the experience of the Sabbath School Teacher in his class, and the father among his own children. "If such is the case among the green trees, what must it be with the dry?" But the Ragged Schools are not without their fruits, although, as in other cases, they are not easily discovered. The following account of a meeting of a few of those who formerly attended the Jurston Street

* This is chiefly for health and exercise.

School, has been forwarded by the Superintendent. The gratifying instances therein mentioned afford the best of all evidences of the *permanent* benefits arising from Ragged Schools:—

The School having been established about ten years, it was thought desirable, if possible, to assemble some of the Old Scholars, at a Tea Meeting in the school-rooms. In pursuance of this object, tickets of admission were issued by the teachers to all they could trace, as having some years ago attended the school; but, owing to the migratory habits of the poor, and more particularly that portion from whom we are supplied with scholars in Ragged Schools, many could not be found.

The meeting was held on Wednesday evening, November 21st, 1849, at which above fifty attended (male and female;) their general appearance of cleanliness, decency of attire, and mildness of demeanour—all proved the beneficial results of education, even where many cannot believe that permanent good can be effected. The following letter was read from a female, who is now married, and a member of a Christian church, (Surrey Chapel,) who dates her first serious impressions from the instructions received in the class:—

"My dear Friends and Teachers,—I feel it still a pleasure to call you by that name, as I used to do. One of our dear friends called on me, and wished me to come and bring a few lines with me. I have not much to say. I entered the school when it was first opened, and, I believe, one of the first scholars. I was in Mrs. Cranfield's class when I first had serious impressions, which, I thank God, have continued with me to this day; I believe that none other name but the name of Jesus — none other merits than the merits of Jesus—can I plead in my Father's sight, but through him I may now have access, with confidence, to the throne of grace, and draw near to Christ, that I may receive out of the fulness of his love all that I need—repentance, and the remission of my sins, and that he may dwell in my heart by faith, and that I may be rooted and grounded in his love; and I pray that he will teach me to rely on his blood, and to build all my hopes on his righteousness. God grant that I may be grafted in Christ, and live to him, for the Lord hath spoken peace to my soul. We sail, indeed, amidst angry winds and upon a rough sea, but none of these things can move us while the Ruler of the storm is with us, and sheds from behind the cloud which hides him from us, the consolations of his love.—

'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comforts when we die.'"

A lad, a former scholar, about sixteen years of age, was present, and stated he was a member of a Wesleyan chapel. He often now attends the school, and occasionally has taken a class of junior scholars.

An old scholar, a member of Surrey Chapel, has lately emigrated to Australia; but his sister, who was also a scholar, has now become a teacher.

Many of those who formerly attended the school are in situations, and could not attend the meeting, but are not removed from the notice of the teachers, who are much gratified with their general conduct. One female was present who had been in the same situation more than six years.

A HOPEFUL CHANGE.

When I first called upon this poor family, they never went to the house of God, but he (the husband) went to the public-house, and so spent nearly all his earnings. I then invited the mother to come to the Ragged School services, which she promised, and came with a religious friend. When she went home, she told her husband what she could remember of the discourse, and persuaded him to go likewise. He did so, and the consequence was, the words were applied by the Spirit with power to his soul. He has left off drinking and swearing, and is now to be found three times every Sunday in the house of prayer; and his wife told me that they are the happiest days that ever she spent with him. Their boy is now sent to school, and he takes a great delight in going. He has a good memory, and he goes home and tells them what he has heard. He is very partial to the sermon for the young, and the catechising, and, though young, he feels the difference between his father's former conduct and what it is now. He is only ten years of age, and he told his mother that he would sooner be without food, as he is now at times, and his father attend church, than he would be to have plenty, and his father at the public-house. He, too, sometimes compares the discourses of the ministers to his former conduct, which often makes him weep.—*St. Martin's Ragged School, Birmingham.*

HOPE IN DEATH.

This little boy, in consequence of his father's being out of employ, was admitted into the Ragged School a few weeks ago, where, from the account I received of his parents, he received much spiritual good. When he was first taken ill, he would frequently, as well as he was able, sing his little favourite hymns that he had learnt there. Upon one occasion, a few days previous to his death, he observed his mother in tears. He said, "Oh, mother, I thought you loved me!" She replied, "I do love you, my dear child." He said, "Do you?—then why do you cry, as if you wished me to stay in this wicked, naughty world, with you? I want to go to that happy land that we used to sing about at school—I want to go to Jesus Christ. So don't cry, mother, and I will tell you something that I was told at school. If you and father are good, you'll come too; and then we shall be happy, shan't we?" He addressed his father in a similar manner, and cautioned his little brothers and sisters against telling stories, or else they would never go to God. His last dying words were to this effect: "I'm going to Jesus! I'm going home! I'm going to that happy land!"—*Ibid.*

FIRST FRUITS.

This man has long been under the afflicting hand of God, but he is looking up to Jesus continually for grace and strength. He told me that his boy, who is in the Ragged School, is deriving spiritual benefit from the instructions there imparted; he has now a longing desire for the services, and he has more of the spirit of prayer. He further informed me, that he has often seen him on his knees alone, when he has thought that no eye has seen him but God, and that no ear heard him but His—he has been pouring out his soul before Him.—*Ibid.*

SEED-TIME AND HARVEST.

Brethren, now is your seed-time; thought, words, and actions, are the seed sown; eternity is the harvest. Though the seed now lies under the clod, unregarded by most men, *every* grain shall spring up at length, and the fruit will be according to the seed.—*Boston.*

Poetry.

"HOW DO YOU CARRY YOUR COLOURS?"

LINES FOR CHRIST'S SOLDIERS;

BEING THE CONCLUSION OF A SPEECH MADE AT A RAGGED SCHOOL MEETING, IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF A MILITARY COLLEGE.*

"How do you carry your colours," Friend?
Is a question "Old Humphrey" lately penn'd:
And, "How do you carry your colours?" I,
Will ask of this goodly company.—

Do you carry your colours so, that they
Who are marching along the downward way,
May come to your ranks—maintain the strife
With sin, and "lay hold on eternal life?"—

Do you carry your colours so, that truth
May shine in the eyes of neglected youth—
And lure them away from the foe whose skill,
Is leading them prisoners at his will?—

How do you carry your colours, Friends?—
Do you carry them so as to make amends
For the time that was lost, when you let them lie
Furl'd up, while a multitude pass'd you by?—

Do you carry your colours in such a form,
That soldiers of Christ whose hearts are warm,
May see that your love and esteem they share,
Though a different uniform each may wear?—

And what are the colours ye bear so bold?—
A Lamb, and a cross, and the word "Behold!"
A dove, and star, and a glittering gem;
The pearl of great price for a diadem!—

Then oh let us carry our colours so
That all may our line, and our lineage know:
And praise, for the life that on earth we live,
To the Captain of our salvation give.—

Let us carry them so that the world may trace,
The crown that proclaims us of royal race;
As those who the darkness of earth have trod,
The "children of light" and "the sons of God."—

Let us carry our colours so that He
Who marshals the hosts of eternity,
May say, when the warfare is o'er, "Come in,
Ye blessed," the Conqueror's crown to win.—

And then may we go, with a youthful band,
And carry our colours to His right hand;
And bow at His footstool, and sing the strain,
"Worthy the Lamb, who for us was slain."—

Temple. JOSEPH PAYNE.

* Suggested by a sentence in an excellent book, called "Half Hours with Old Humphrey," published by the Religious Tract Society.

Intelligence.

KING EDWARD STREET RAGGED SCHOOL, MILE END, NEW TOWN.

THE Annual Meeting of this School was held in the London Tavern, on Wednesday evening, the 21st of November, 1849, at which the Lord Mayor presided.

Mr. H. R. Williams, the hon. secretary, read the Report, which stated, that about two years since an effort had been made to establish a system of industrial training in this large and important district. It had been found that the operations of the school, could not be successfully carried out upon the present premises, and they had, therefore, resolved again to appeal to the public to aid them in endeavouring to carry out their system, by which many destitute and orphan youths might be fitted, as colonists or otherwise, by their activity and industry to earn their own livelihood. With this object the Committee proposed to erect a suitable room as a Ragged School, providing workrooms and dormitories for the entirely destitute. The Infant School was conducted by an efficient trained mistress, and was open five days in the week, for the gratuitous instruction of the destitute children of the neighbourhood. The present daily attendance varied from 100 to 137. The Evening School, for lads from ten to eighteen years of age, was open four evenings in a week; it was conducted by a paid master, assisted by several voluntary teachers, and the attendance averaged about 50. A class for needlework was also in operation four evenings in the week, for girls, and promised to be very efficient. It was conducted by voluntary teachers, and the attendance frequently exceeded 40. The school was open all day upon the Sabbath, but from various causes very few attended in the morning or afternoon. From 200 to 240 children, however, were generally present in the evening, who were instructed by about 20 voluntary teachers, male and female. These combined efforts had necessarily involved a considerable expenditure.

The Meeting was afterwards addressed by Lord Radstock, the Rev. C. Marshall, Mr. Johnson, Sir John Osborne, Joseph Payne, Esq., Rev. W. Tyler, Rev. J. Turnbull, and Rev. J. W. C. Pennington.

EXETER BUILDINGS RAGGED SCHOOLS, CHELSEA.

THE Annual Meeting of these Schools was held in the Cadogan Rooms, Sloane Street, on Tuesday, the 4th December. The Chair was taken by the Right Hon. Lord Ashley, M.P., at two o'clock, P.M.

His Lordship, in opening the Meeting, adverted to the effort now making to enable the distressed needlewomen to emigrate, and intimated the close connexion which existed between their emigration and that of the children from the Ragged Schools.

The Report stated, that during the year the school had been doubled in size, and rendered more efficient by the services of a master and assistant. About thirty boys and girls had been placed in situations during the year, most of whom were doing well. The receipts for the year were £179. 15*s.* 4*d.*, and the expenses £178. 17*s.* 11*d.*, leaving a balance of 17*s.* 5*d.* The amount expended for enlarging the school was £128. 14*s.* 2*d.*, for which the treasurer had only received £110. 2*s.* 2*d.*, leaving a balance due of £18. 12*s.* The Meeting was addressed by the Rev. W. Arthur, Rev. Mr. Scott, Rev. Mr. Cousins, and other gentlemen. The collection amounted to £11.

An Evening Meeting was held in the same place, at seven o'clock. The Hon. Arthur Kinnaird in the Chair. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. Dr. Morison, Joseph Payne, Esq., Rev. J. Branch, and others. The collection amounted to about £5.

UNION MEWS RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE Sixth Annual Meeting of this Institution (being also the anniversary of the school) was held on Monday evening, December 10th, at the Hanover-square Rooms, the president, Benjamin Bond Cabbell, Esq., M.P., in the Chair. The proceedings having been opened with prayer, letters of apology were read from Mr. Sheriff Nicoll and the Revs. Mr. Robinson and Mr. Hughes.

The Chairman said, he need not remind the Meeting that the object in view was to receive the Annual Report of the Union Mews Ragged School. This school had been in existence

upwards of six years, and during that period every Report had confirmed the opinion of those who had embarked in the undertaking, as to the happy results of their endeavours to reform those unfortunate children who were left without the protection of their parents in this wide world.

The honorary secretary, Mr. Hepburn, then read the Annual Report, which detailed with great minuteness the proceedings of the school. It stated, that during the last year there had been an increased accommodation effected, and there had been a continued increase of scholars, and the applications for admission had been so numerous that many could not be complied with. The accommodation was for 160, but there had been many times as many as 200. There was a want of room for the girls. The average attendance had been 146 for each Sunday throughout the year, being 88 boys, and 58 girls. The average attendance on week evenings was 45 boys and 50 girls. The attendance in the cold months was much larger, being 181 for the six winter months, and 111 for the six summer months.

The Meeting was afterwards addressed by the Revs. Dr. Archer, R. Redpath, Dr. Burns, Mr. W. Locke, and the Rev. Mr. Rogers.

Subscriptions were announced from B. B. Cabbell, Esq. M.P., president, £10.; Mr. Sheriff Nicoll, treasurer, ten guineas; Mr. Thompson, one guinea, etc. The collection amounted to £7. 17*s.* 7*d.*

LAMBETH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The Annual Meeting of the friends and supporters of these schools took place on Thursday evening, December 6th, at the Horns Tavern, Kennington. The spacious room was well filled. Lord Ashley, M.P., presided.

After a hymn was sung, Lord Ashley said, he took a very particular interest in this school, as one of the first with which he had been connected. He wished also to bear testimony to the zeal and efficiency with which the school had been conducted, and the philanthropy which had been exhibited in its behalf by the family of Mr. Doulton, of the Potteries. It might be that juvenile delinquency was not sensibly diminished in the metropolis by these schools; but, at all events, they had prevented its excess and increase. Ere now, but for these institutions, it might have risen to such a pitch as to call for the interference of the Government by some punitive measure. (Hear, hear.) Last session he had made another effort to produce on the Government and the public mind a disposition to aid these schools. The year before he had been received with open arms; last session he had barely obtained a hearing; such were the changes to which the feelings of large bodies were subject. It was but a stimulus for those who supported Ragged Schools to rely more on their own efforts.

Mr. Fred. Doulton, the hon. secretary, read the Report, from which it appeared that the results of the past year's labours had been most satisfactory and encouraging; numerous instances had occurred, in which persons in the very lowest depths of ignorance and vice had risen, through the instrumentality of these schools, to the dignity of responsible and intelligent citizens. On the Sabbath evening upwards of 400 children attended, and on week evenings nearly 200; a great improvement in their attendance and attention had been obtained by giving tickets, to be exchanged for small Scripture and other books.

Nine boys and girls had been sent to Australia, all of whom had obtained good situations. Two letters received, of a most interesting nature, were read to the Meeting. The Report concluded by enforcing the importance of steady annual subscriptions, as affording the only means whereby these schools could be kept in efficient working order. The financial statement showed a receipt from donations, subscriptions, and collections, of £85. 14*s.* 5*d.* There had been expended during the year £145. 8*s.* 11½*d.*, leaving a balance due to the treasurer of £59. 14*s.* 6*d.*

Various resolutions for carrying out the objects of the Institution were moved and seconded by Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, Rev. T. Binney, Rev. Robt. Eden, Rev. Jas. Sherman, Thos. Beggs, Esq., John Brown, Esq., John Corderoy, Esq., and W. Locke, Esq. A vote of thanks to the noble Chairman closed the proceedings.

The Children's Gallery.

WHAT ARE RAGGED SCHOOLS?

Little boys and girls often ask, What are Ragged Schools? We will tell them. They are not National Schools, nor British Schools, nor Boarding Schools such as you go to. Poor ragged children, who have few clothes, and no shoes nor stockings, and no kind father nor mother to keep them clean and neat; such poor children are not allowed to enter the schools you go to, and have no money to pay for being there. These unfortunate children have often no home and no food, as well as no clothes and money, and how can they get to a school unless some one pays for them, or teaches them for nothing? Well, Ragged Schools are for such poor children; and there kind people meet to instruct them in reading and writing, and sometimes to teach them to make or mend clothes. Is that not very kind, and will you not help to pay for rooms and books? I am sure you will, if you *knew* more about them. Some day, soon, we shall try to tell you more.

THE CLEAN SHIRT;

OR, WHERE THERE IS A WILL THERE IS A WAY.

How easy it is for some little boys to wear clean shirts. They don't need to pay for washing them, they don't need to wash them themselves, and they have always a clean one to put on, when the one they are wearing gets dirty. But there are many of the poor ragged boys who have no shirts at all, not even one to wear. And there are others who have only got one; perhaps an old one, given by some kind friend; and if ever they get it washed, they must go without one until it is dried. We once heard a little ragged boy say to his teacher, "Teacher, may I go out?" His teacher asked where he wanted to go. He said, "Please, teacher, mother's washing my shirt, an I aint got another, and I want to go and get it on." His teacher allowed him to go, and when he returned, he said, "Have you got your shirt now?" "No, teacher," said he, "mother haint got it dried yet." Now, it was quite right for the boy's mother to wash his shirt, but she ought not to have done it on the Sabbath day, for God says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

A friend of ours lately told us of another Ragged School boy, who has only got one shirt. But he has got no mother to wash it for him, for his father and mother died when he was very young. He was brought up in the workhouse, and afterwards apprenticed to the sea. Once he was away on a long voyage, and it came on a storm. The wind blew so high, that the great swelling waves had almost swallowed up the ship and all the crew. They dashed right over the deck, so that the sailors had to put on their waterproof coats; but this poor boy had not one to put on, and he got so often drenched to the skin with salt water, that he caught a very bad cold. The cold soon settled on his lungs, and his cough became so bad, that he was no longer able to pull the ropes, or to climb to the rigging, and when the ship came to shore the captain discharged him. But, poor boy! what was he to do? No one would give him work for he was too weak, and he had no money, no home, no friends! What could he do? We can tell you one thing he did. He went to the Ragged School, where his teacher taught him good lessons. He also tried to hold horses and run errands, for which people gave him a few pence that bought him food. But he could not pay for lodgings, and very often he has wandered about the streets all night, or slept on a cold door-step, or under a damp arch. Now, we have said that he has only one shirt, and no one to care for him, and no home to go to—*and yet he has a clean shirt every week washed in hot water!* Perhaps you wonder how he can get it, and well you may; but if you saw him you would believe it, for his face is always clean, and his shirt too. "Where

there is a will there is a way." To save you the trouble of guessing, we shall let you hear the boy's explanation.

"Empty belly, or no empty belly," he says, "I likes to be clean, and can't abear to be dirty—a clean shirt for me, it makes yer feel so comfortable. I've only got one, but I always has a clean shirt once a week, even when I has to walk the streets at nights." "And how do you manage to wash your shirt when you have no shelter?" "Why, I'll tell you, sir," said he. "I goes into some by-place, and takes off my shirt, then I goes to a blind alley up by Whitecross Street, where the waste hot water runs from some works, and there I washes my shirt; then I runs with it to the lime-kilns the other side of Blackfriars Bridge, and there I dries it, and puts it on. A clean shirt for me—I can't abear no filth."

Surely this poor boy deserves another shirt. How cold he must feel when coming out of the "blind alley," where he has been standing in hot water! Might not some of our young readers pity this poor deserving boy, and try to spare him another shirt; or what would be better, save up the pence they often spend on toys, and buy him a new one? They might do all this and more; they might buy him a pair of new shoes to keep his feet dry in this cold weather. Some one might raise as much as would buy him a Bible, and another might collect ten shillings to help to keep him in an Industrial School. To those who say they can do neither, we reply, "Where there is a will there is a way."

THE RAGGED SCHOOL MONEY BOX.

Little Tommie was at school about two miles from his home; he stayed there all the week, having his breakfast there, his dinner there, his tea there, and his bed there too. But on Saturday he was permitted to come home to see his dear pa' and ma'; and what is more, he was allowed to stop with them all the sweet Sabbath, and go to church with them. He was only seven years old, but he loved his pa' and ma', and he loved going to hear about Jesus with them on Sunday. Well, he heard one day about poor ragged children, that had no comfortable home as he had, and no nice school as he had, and no snug bed as he had; and he heard, also, of some kind gentlemen who were caring for these poor ragged children, and who were taking them out of the cold streets where they wandered barefoot, and who were teaching them to read the Bible in nice warm school-rooms. Not so nice and clean as Tommie's school-room, but yet much nicer and warmer than the cold street; and what do you think he thought? Why, he thought if he and his school-fellows had a Ragged School Box, and if they put into it each one penny a week, it would soon make up a good sum. I think there were nine of them, that would be nine-pence a week, or, very nearly £2 a year.

Well, he became very anxious to have a Ragged School Box, and every time he came home he asked mamma to get him one. He went also to his uncle, who helped to find money for Ragged Schools, and begged him to get him a box. His uncle said he would, but in one or two weeks forgot the promise. But Tommie did not forget the poor ragged children. He laid aside his pence in one corner of his drawer, and every Saturday that he came home he asked his uncle for the box. "Please, uncle, have you got the Ragged School Box yet?" he would say. Well, at last his uncle brought him the box, a nice white gilt box, enough to hold three hundred pennies, or one thousand sixpences; and now, every week, he and his school-fellows pop something into it.

Will not God be good to little boys who thus think of poor children? I am sure he will, for he says, "Blessed is he that careth for the poor and the needy."

W. L.

SO MANY CALLS.

It was a brisk, clear evening in the latter part of December, when Mr. A—— returned from his counting-house to the comforts of a bright coal fire, and warm arm-chair in his parlour at home. He changed his heavy boots for slippers, drew around him the folds of his evening gown, and then lounging back in the chair, looked up to the ceiling and about with an air of satisfaction. Still there was a cloud on his brow. What could be the matter with Mr. A——? To tell the truth, he had that afternoon,

in his counting-room, received the agent of one of the principal religious charities of the day, and had been warmly urged to double his last year's subscription, and the urging had been pressed by statements and arguments to which he did not know well how to reply. "People think," soliloquized he to himself, "that I am made of money, I believe. This is the fourth object this year for which I have been requested to double my subscription, and this year has been one of heavy family expenses—building and fitting-up this house—carpets—curtains—no end to the new things to be bought. I do not see, really, how I am to give a sixpence more in charity. Then, there are the bills for the boys and girls—they all say they must have twice as much now as before we came to this house—I wonder if I did right in building it?" And Mr. A—— glanced unceasingly up and down the ceiling, and around on the costly furniture, and looked into the fire in silence. He was tired, harassed, and sleepy—his head began to swim, and his eyes closed. He fell asleep. In his sleep he thought he heard a tap at the door; and there stood a plain, poor-looking man, who, in a voice singularly low and sweet, asked for a few moments conversation with him. Mr. A—— asked him into the parlour, and drew him a chair near the fire. The stranger looked attentively around, and then turning to Mr. A—— presented him with a paper. "It is your last year's subscription to missions," said he; "you know all the wants of that cause that can be told you; I came to see if you had anything more to add to it."

This was said in the same low and quiet voice as before; but for some reason unaccountable to himself, Mr. A—— was more embarrassed by the plain, poor, unpretending man than he had been in the presence of any one before. He was for some moments silent before he could reply at all, and then in a hurried and embarrassed manner he began the same excuses which had appeared so satisfactory to him the afternoon before—the hardness of the times, the difficulty of collecting money, family expenses, etc.

The stranger quietly surveyed the spacious apartment, with its many elegancies and luxuries, and without any comment took from the merchant the paper he had given, but immediately presented him with another.

"This is your subscription to the Tract Society; have you anything to add to it? You know how much it has been doing, and how much more it now desires to do, if Christians would only furnish means. Do you not feel called upon to add something to it."

Mr. A—— was very uneasy under this appeal; but there was something in the still, mild manner of the stranger that restrained him; but he answered that though he regretted it exceedingly, his circumstances were such that he could not this year conveniently add to any of his charities.

The stranger received back the paper without any reply, but immediately presented in its place the subscription to the Bible Society, and in a few clear and forcible words reminded him of its well-known claims, and again requested him to add something to his donations. Mr. A—— became impatient.

"Have I not said," he replied, "that I can do nothing more for any charity than I did last year? There seems to be no end to the calls these days. At first, there were only three or four objects presented, and the sums required moderate—now the objects increase every day, and call upon us for money; and all, after we have given once, want us to double and treble and quadruple our subscriptions. There is no end to the thing. We may as well stop in one place as another.

The stranger took back the paper, rose, and fixing his eye on his companion, said, in a voice that thrilled to his soul, "One year ago to-night you thought that your daughter lay dying—you could not rest for agony—upon whom did you call that night?"

The merchant started and looked up—there seemed a change to have passed over the whole form of his visitor, whose eye was fixed on him with a calm, intense, penetrating expression that subdued him—he drew back, covered his face, and made no reply.

"Five years ago," said the stranger, "when you lay at the brink of the grave, and thought that if you died then you would leave a family unprovided for, do you remember how you prayed? Who saved you then?"

The stranger paused for an answer, but there was a dead silence. The mer-

chant only bent forward as one entirely overcome, and rested his head on the seat before him.

The stranger drew yet nearer, and said, in a still lower and more impressive tone, "Do you remember fifteen years since, that time when you felt yourself so lost, so helpless, so hopeless; when you spent day and night in prayer; when you thought you would give the world for one hour's assurance that your sins were forgiven you? Who listened to you then?"

"It was my God and Saviour," said the merchant, with a sudden burst of remorseful feeling—"O yes, it was he!"

"And has he ever complained of being called on too often?" inquired the stranger, in a voice of reproachful sweetness. "Say," added he, "are you willing to begin this night, and ask no more of him, if he from this night will ask no more from you?"

"O never, never, never," said the merchant, throwing himself at his feet; but as he spake these words, the figure seemed to vanish, and he awoke with his whole soul stirred within him.

"O God and Saviour! what have I been doing!" he exclaimed. "Take all—take everything—what is all that I have to what thou hast done for me?"—*Christian Treasury.*

THE EMIGRANTS.

Some poor ragged boys and girls were taken from the Ragged Schools last year, and sent to Australia. It was expected that they would soon get places, and so it has turned out. Some are getting 30*s.* a week. Some as shepherd boys, £12 to £16 a year, and all their food and lodging beside. Some of their letters are very amusing and interesting. To please our young friends, we will give a part of one of them. The following is from a little girl:—

"All that you have got to do is to behave yourself, and conduct yourself with propriety. I like Adelaide very much indeed. Oh! it is such a very beautiful place. I am sure if you were here you would like it. It is such a healthy place, that it is quite a new thing to hear of anybody being ill or dying. Where I am living is the Port; in front of the house is the river; it is salt water. I can see all the ships that come in, as it is the harbour, and a very beautiful place it is. At the back of the house is, I was going to say, the whole country, but it is not half nor a quarter of it, it is such a very large country; well, at the back of the house you can see for miles; you can see the hills that seem to touch the clouds, covered with green. They tell me this is where all the mines are, and where all the wealth of the land lies. There may well be such talk about it in England. As soon as the pilot came on board the ship, he told us we were going to a land flowing with milk and honey. One day I went with my mistress a long way up the country; we went to North Adelaide, which is a beautiful place. They are busy building houses, all built with bricks. There are some very handsome houses in Adelaide, I was surprised when I saw them. The government house is large, and beautifully ornamented, soldiers keeping guard. It is just like looking at the Queen's palace. There are plenty of natives, almost all black, but they are so harmless that they never offer to touch you."

We hope to tell our young friends more about the emigrants another time.

TRUE SYMPATHY.

A poor little girl was one day sent by her parents to buy some treacle. On her way home she let fall her jug, which broke and spilt all her treacle in the mud. She looked at it with a sad countenance, and burst into tears. As she stood, there passed by several people. One said, "Poor thing!" but passed on. Another said, "What a pity!" but passed on too. A third (some mischievous boy perhaps) said, "Won't she catch it when she gets home." But a fourth person coming up, had true pity on the child, and putting his hand in his pocket, gave her a shilling to get another jug and more treacle, which sent her away smiling.

So with poor ragged boys and girls. It is not enough to pity—*we must help* by the means God has given us—and dry up their tears, and lessen their sorrows as much as we can.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE

DWELLINGS OF THE INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES.

It must be gratifying to every benevolent mind, to hear of the efforts that are being made in many parts of the metropolis for improving the dwellings of the poor. This is not only a step in the right direction, but it is one so indispensable, that every attempt to elevate the moral and spiritual condition of the poor must be materially hindered if this be left undone. As well may we expect to gather "grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles," as to find decorum or decency among the masses of human beings, who are huddled together by thousands in the filthy lanes and alleys of the metropolis. In vain do we strive to instil notions of cleanliness or self-respect into the mind of the ragged boy, if his only home be in a damp and dingy cellar, or among the demoralising scenes of a low lodging-house. In the absence of those comforts which every man must enjoy who loves his home, the parents seek a substitute in the debasing enjoyments of the public-house, and their children in the penny theatres, where the one is being prepared for the parish workhouse, and the other for prison and transportation. We look upon the erection of every respectable lodging-house (or poor man's dwelling,) as another auxiliary in the great work of moral reformation, and hence we rejoice that an extensive one has lately been opened in Spitalfields for single men, by "The Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes." A Public Meeting was held in the new building, on the 12th December last, at which the Earl of Carlisle took the chair. By an arrangement with the Secretary of the Association we are enabled to furnish our readers with a report of that interesting meeting, and a description of the new building, in *addition* to our specified number of pages. We trust the promoters of the Association will meet with that liberal encouragement which the importance of their object so much deserves.—[Ed.]

On Wednesday, December 12th, a meeting of the shareholders and friends of this Association, (the Offices of which are at 19, Coleman-street, City,) to whose exertions the "dwellings for families" in Pancras-road owe their origin, was held at the Metropolitan Buildings, Albert-street, Spicer-street, Spitalfields, which form a pile of erections, partly completed and partly still in course of construction, intended to be let at moderate rents, as improved dwellings, to working men and their families. The portion of the buildings which was opened

yesterday is adapted for the accommodation of 234 single men, and includes every requisite arrangement to enable them to live there with cleanliness, health, and comfort. The extent of this structure, and the conveniences which it will enable the working man to command, will be easily comprehended from the following description:—

The building is five stories in height from the basement. The latter is surrounded by an open area, and contains baths and washhouses, with all the requisite appurtenances, extensive cellarage, and ample space for workshops. Upon the ground-floor, the entrance-hall is commanded by the superintendent's apartments, which are placed on the left, while the store-room and cook's apartments occupy about the same space on the right. Immediately in front of the entrance are the stairs, of fire-proof construction, which lead to the three stories of sleeping apartments; and opposite the stairs, on the ground-floor, is a good-sized lavatory for day use. The coffee-room is directly in front of the staircase-hall, and extends to the back of the building, communicating on one side with a reading-room, and on the other with a kitchen for the use of the inmates. It is a lofty room, divided into aisles by iron columns supporting an open roof of stained timbers, lighted by a large window at the further end, two smaller side windows, and sheets of rough plate in the roof. Boxes are fitted with tables and seats round three sides, and the room is warmed by hot-water pipes. A cook's bar opens into the coffee-room, for the supply of coffee, etc. The reading-room, size 60 feet by 21 feet 9 inches, is warmed by open fires, and intended to be furnished with some of the daily papers and popular periodicals. The kitchen, 45 feet by 21 feet 9 inches, for the use of the inmates, contains two ranges provided with hot water, a sink with cold water, and common apparatus for cooking purposes. From this kitchen a stone staircase leads to a portion of the basement, containing 234 small meat-safes, all under lock and key, raised on brick piers, placed in ranges back to back, with ample space for ventilation. The cook's shop is connected with the men's kitchen by a bar, from which cooked provisions may be obtained at almost any hour of the day. The three upper stories are fitted with sleeping apartments on each side of the corridors. Each compartment measures 8 feet by 4 feet 6 inches, and is lighted by half a window, the upper portion only opening, and this is hung on centres. These rooms are all furnished with iron bedsteads and suitable bed furniture. There is also in each a locker for linen and clothes, with a false bottom for the admission of fresh air, so that the sleeping berths can be ventilated at the pleasure of the lodgers. All the doors are secured by spring latches, of which each inmate has his own key, and no key will open the lock of any other in the same wing. On each floor are lavatories, fitted with cast-iron enamel basins, set in slate fittings. The partitions forming the sleeping compartments are kept below the ceiling for the purpose of ventilation, and the corridors have windows at each end to ensure a thorough draught when necessary. With respect to ventilation, the principal agent is a shaft, which rises nearly 100 feet, into which several of the smoke flues are conveyed, and by which means a powerful upward current is maintained. The sleeping apartments and other principal rooms are connected by vitiated air flues with the ventilating shafts, and the current is regulated at pleasure by means of dampers, placed under the control of the superintendent. *Water.*—Large cisterns in the roofs, and smaller ones in other parts of the building, afford an ample supply of water to every part of the premises. *Dust.*—Every floor has an opening, secured by an iron door, into a dust shaft, communicating with a dust cellar in the basement. *Gas.*—The whole building is well lighted by gas. This building has been erected from the designs and under the superintendence of Mr. W. Beck, 33, Broad-street Buildings, and the builder is Mr. S. Grimsdell. The terms 3*s.* per week, payable in advance. Each inmate will have, besides his sleeping apartment, the use of the coffee-room, reading-room, and the public kitchen, where he may cook his own food, or he can obtain ready cooked provisions from the cook's shop. Every lodger is furnished with a small larder under his own lock and key, has free access to the washhouse at certain times of the day, and can, by the payment of a small sum, have a hot or cold bath. Adjoining to this building, and within the same inclosed ground, an extensive range of buildings for 60 families is now in course of erection, of which particulars will be furnished when they are completed.

Previous to the commencement of the proceedings of the meeting, the buildings were thrown open to the inspection of the company, and the substantial and convenient manner in which all the different portions of the erection are constructed, and the arrangements made for the comfort of the expected inmates, both in the part appropriated to single men and that assigned for families, (the latter not being yet entirely finished,) appeared to give the greatest satisfaction. The rent of these lodgings must of course be moderate, or the whole object of the institution would be frustrated, and consequently the rent charged to a single man will, as before stated, be *3s.* a-week; and to a family, for a dwelling in the building, consisting of three rooms and a small kitchen, with water, water-closet, cupboards, store-places, and every possible convenience for a humble family, *5s. 6d.* a-week. The Metropolitan Company, from their first efforts, decided on forming themselves into a commercial company, under the conviction that the industrious classes could and would independently so afford to pay for improved dwellings as should make it a profitable investment to erect them. In the year 1845 a charter of incorporation was granted, enabling them to raise a capital of £100,000, in 4,000 shares of £25 each, and they have now enrolled among their shareholders the names of many of the highest personages in the land. The charter limits the liability of the shareholders to the amount of their shares, and the rate of interest to 5 per cent.

Shortly after 2 o'clock a large company, consisting of ladies and gentlemen, having assembled in the "coffee-room" contained in the new building, the Earl of Carlisle took the chair. Among the company present were—Viscount Ebrington, Sir Ralph Howard, Bart, M.P., the Hon. D. F. Fortescue, the Rev. Mr. Evans, Mr. W. A. Wilkinson, Mr. J. W. Tottie, Mr. E. C. Tufnell, Mr. T. F. Gibson, the Rev. W. Stone, Mr. C. A. Hanbury, Mr. R. L. Beck, Mr. J. Toynbee, Dr. S. Smith, the Hon. F. Byng, Lady Ann Tufnell, Miss Tufnell, Mr. H. Sullivan, Dr. Gavin, Dr. Guy, Mr. W. Beck, the Architect, and Mr. C. Gatliff, the Secretary.

The Earl of CARLISLE immediately after his entrance addressed the assembled company. He said that the shareholders of the institution had held that day a meeting to transact the due and ordinary course of business which came before them; but they had thought that there were circumstances in the present position of the institution, and indeed in the general state of affairs in which they met, which had warranted them in inviting a still larger portion of their friends and well-wishers to attend on the present occasion, and which further warranted them in endeavouring to impress the claims of the institution at this precise period in a more marked and especial manner on the attention of its friends and supporters, and on that of the public at large. (Hear, hear.) He did not thereby only allude to the circumstance, though it was not certainly without its interest and significance, that they were now for the first time assembled in that building, which from that moment they proposed to set apart for the purpose for which it was intended, namely, to give a comfortable and respectable dwelling and home to the industrious working man who chose to resort to it. (Hear.) The company now present had perhaps had an opportunity before the proceedings of that meeting commenced—at all events, they might have an opportunity afterwards—of inspecting the premises, and of forming their own judgment upon their details, their dimensions, accommodations, and adaptation to their ends—health, convenience, comfort, and respectability. They might examine the ventilating shafts, the pipes for the supply of hot and cold water, the light, the washing apparatus, the drying-house, the machine for wringing clothes, the bath-rooms below, and all the admirable arrangements for securing cleanliness, together with the spacious and handsome apartments above. They might examine all the conveniences of the coffee-room in which they were assembled, of the eating-room, and the library. Of these the company present might form their own judgment; but he admitted that the best test of their success must be found in the experience of their future inmates, and the result of their experience could alone test the value of the present experiment. (Hear.) He would, however, take the liberty of saying, that bygone experience warranted them in entertaining some confidence in this respect. (Hear, hear.) He was now alluding to the model lodging-house for families which the present association had already opened in the Old Pancras-road. (Hear, hear.) That had now been opened for nearly the space of two years, and what was the actual practical result? He might state, without the fear of contradiction, that the tenants

therein appeared and expressed themselves fully sensible of the efforts which had been made by the association to improve the dwellings which they had been allowed to occupy. They had expressed themselves as being sensible that the association had come forward as real friends to do them justice. (Hear, hear.) Their complaints, if any thing appeared to them wrong in their accommodation, were attentively listened to, and, if reasonable, they were at once attended to, and the grievance was removed; while, on the other hand, if it were represented to them that they were demanding more than they had a right to expect, and that the funds of the society did not admit of the alterations they required, they had then almost uniformly expressed themselves satisfied with the reasons adduced. (Hear.) Another gratifying circumstance was the punctuality with which the tenants had paid their rents. (Hear, hear.) He was authorized to state, that out of the whole sum of £2,418 which had become due from them in the punctual payment of their rents, there had only been the sum of £1. 19*s*. 7*d*. which could be pronounced a bad debt. (Applause.) £5. 4*s*. 1*d*. might still be considered doubtful; but there were good reasons for anticipating that the society would get a great part of that; and that the actual arrears of 110 occupiers of separate apartments amounted to only £7. 10*s*. (Applause.) As a further proof that the accommodation was valued, and that the association had not miscalculated the demand which would be made for the conveniences they professed to supply, he might mention, that whereas there were about 110 sets of apartments, upon the average not above two sets had been left vacant. (Hear, hear.) Then, with respect to the health of the inmates, he was sure that all present at the regular meeting in last May, would remember with pleasure the very interesting details supplied on that occasion by Dr. Southwood Smith, with respect to the complaints, state of health, and of mortality of the inmates. (Hear, hear.) Since that period, a person who had been compelled from circumstances to leave the model lodging-house, had stated that he regretted his departure the more, as he had never had a day's illness in the building while there for more than three months, and that for three years before he had never been free from rheumatism. (Hear, hear.) But what brought this circumstance more prominently before their notice was the gratifying fact, that during the late epidemic, which spread so much mourning and misery throughout the metropolis, not a single case of cholera occurred in the model lodging-house, while in Pancras-road, adjoining, the disease raged to a formidable extent. Other lodging-houses and model establishments on similar principles exhibited the same gratifying result—a total immunity from that dreadful disease, which, at the same time, had been ravaging the immediate neighbourhood. He wished this to be noted as a matter of gratitude, on the part of those who had escaped death, for their past deliverance, and as a matter of warning for their future safety. That society had proved, that by proper precautions and arrangements they could, under the Almighty's blessing, insure, he had almost said, the certainty of safety. The association had proved, that they could make the inmates of these establishments, who would have been exposed to the malignant influence without, when admitted within—

"Draw a purer breath,
"When nature sickens and each gale is death."

(Hear.) This seemed to have been so much the common feeling, that it led many, and among others the active and zealous Metropolitan who presided over that diocese, to recommend that the collections in churches made on the occasion of the late general thanksgiving for the cessation of the cholera, should be especially devoted to the improvement of the dwellings of the poor, and specifically to model lodging-houses. It was true that the greater portion of these funds were conferred upon another society which pursued kindred purposes, though not upon precisely the same principle with their own, "The Society for Improving the Dwellings of the Labouring Classes." When he mentioned that society, let it not be supposed for one instant that he was placing them and the present society in a position of any antagonism, or that he was grudging them any portion of the funds which they then received or might hereafter receive. On the contrary, he was sure the present society wished them from their hearts good speed, and he said further, he thought the principle of that other society, which was that of a strictly charitable institution, without looking to any return, might have been better suited to such an occasion, which

was intended to elicit the freewill offerings of a rescued and grateful people. But here he must permit himself to observe, that among the many highly satisfactory indications which marked the day of general thanksgiving throughout our land—the suspension of business, the crowded attendance, the reverent attention—the amount of contributions in the greater portion of the metropolitan places of worship hardly seemed to him to come up, on the whole, to the claims of the nation. Viewed as a nation's holocaust, he should say the amount was not considerable. (Hear.) He knew that many fair reasons might be alleged—considerable local exertions had been required during the prevalence of the disease; many of the wealthier members of the congregations were out of London; but all that brought him to this, to those who had not discharged any, or what they themselves would feel to be a sufficient thank-offering for the mercies they had received, for the immunity they had enjoyed—who felt that something of acknowledgment was still due to the Supreme Dispenser of health and life, that some further manifestation of sympathy might be gracefully shown to their suffering brethren—that, above all, some effectual safeguard should be given them for the future—the present society, he presumed to think, afforded a reasonable, safe, and permanent channel for effecting these desirable and blessed ends. (Hear, hear.) Any particulars about the money affairs of the institution, the state of their balance, the amount of expenditure, the prospects of dividend, could be supplied as fully as might wished, with all possible openness he was sure, by their painstaking and zealous secretary, Mr. Gatliff. (Hear.) The members of the present society took no shame to themselves; nay, they were eager to proclaim and to boast, that, though the principle of purely charitable contribution, without any expectation or opportunity of return, had its appropriate times and places, their hope and object was to make their institution self-supporting, (hear,) insuring a fair profit and quick return for whatever they laid out. They wished they could have even made these results evident sooner; but until they were fairly launched into the current of capital on which they originally reckoned, while they were obliged, among other things, to maintain a staff which would serve for their operations, when complete, at almost its full complement, while their operations were as yet only partial, it was evident that profits and returns could only gather gradually. He believed, however, he was warranted in stating, that there were good grounds for calculating on a return of 2½ or 3 per cent. a year hence, when the building they were now in, and that immediately adjoining for families, should be brought into full development; and upon an ultimate return of 5 per cent., if the enlightened benevolence of the public should enable them to reach the contemplated amount of their capital, £100,000, in 4,000 shares. (Hear, hear.) These topics of profits, and returns, and percentages, might not sound strictly romantic, but, depend upon it, in this era of the world, and in the present temper of mankind, the things the most homely in appearance would be apt to be the more sublime in effect and in extent. (Applause.) Let it be proved that the act of doing good, in however unpretending and common-place a manner, to large masses of the struggling and impoverished, would pay its own way and insure its fair profit, and it would follow that benevolence, instead of being only an ethereal influence in the breasts of a few, fitful and confined in its operations, would become a settled, sober habit of the many; widening as it went, occasioning its own rebound, and adding all the calculations of prudence to all the impulses of generosity. (Applause.) Railways had attracted their millions; that society had not yet reached their single £100,000; but, just consider, he did not say the lines which paid scarcely any, or no dividends at all, but just consider the score or dozen lines that could not even be finished; compare the sum laid out on their incomplete works, their half-piled earth-works, their half-built viaducts, their abandoned plant, with the sum which, confided to the hands of that society, might have given shelter, privacy, health, and life to thousands of families; might have saved their children from disease, perhaps from degradation, (applause,) and he might appeal to the model lodging-house in Pancras-road for the confirmation of every syllable he spoke, might have scattered round the evenings of their laborious days, perhaps round the remainder of their peaceful existence, the comforts, the elegancies, the charities, the sanctities of a home. (Applause.) And, beyond all this, the dividend in the background! Might they not hope, then, that some at least of the many, who, in the present flush of money, were looking anx-

iously out for any investment where they might safely lodge their capital or their wages, and who shrank instinctively from the very thought of railways, would think of the noble asylums which that society sought to multiply around? The members of that society were gratified to think, not only of what they had been permitted to do, and what they trusted to be still permitted, but they were equally, if not more, gratified to hear of the useful contagion of the example which they and the other society to which he had referred had already set. (Hear, hear.) They had heard of projects of a like nature stirring in many of our metropolitan parishes, and in some of our provincial towns. Might they not do well to consider whether they would not avail themselves of the experience and the staff of that society, and raise an adequate amount of money on the understanding that the society should try it even in their respective localities? They heard at Paris of an undertaking based upon the same principle—he believed actually making use of the designs of that society. He believed that in the same manner their designs and plans had been communicated to Belgium and the United States; and among other gratifying and good things in which this country had taken the lead, he thought it would redound to her honour and glory if she could be proved to have shown the way in which comfortable lodgings might be secured to working men. (Applause.) One great recommendation of the proceedings of that society was, that without pretending to more virtue than their neighbours, it was not in the nature of things that they could feel jealousy. On the contrary, one of the most gratifying symptoms of their success was, that they heard of builders around them who were forced, in some degree, to compete with them, to build up to them, to furnish conveniences and comforts of which the society had set the example. (Hear, hear.) He was told that they were not even left to their own choice in this respect, but that many persons treating with them declared that, as the model lodging-houses had a proper supply of water, and many conveniences and comforts, they insisted upon having similar conveniences in whatever lodging they might take. (Hear, hear.) It had been said that the scale of the accommodation of the society did not admit the very poor. He believed there was reason to think that it admitted many of the very ill off, and, at all events, there was the comfort of thinking that the next in social condition succeeded to the tenements which the tenants of the society left, and that the society thus raised the general scale. Talk of jealousy, why the completion of the triumph of the society would be to find themselves outdone. On the day when the poor and working men should refuse to come into the buildings of the society, because they could be better lodged elsewhere, the society's task would be finished, and its object accomplished. "Othello's occupation" would be gone. The rivals of the society gave the best proof that they had made an impression. Their copyists they should look upon as their children. They should wish to be like the tree of which he might remind his classical hearers, after it had undergone the process of grafting—

"Miraturque novas frondes, et non sua poma;"

or as there were, he was happy to say, many fair contributors present, he would be justified in hazarding a translation—

"Admires th' adopted fruits and foliage not her own."

He was extremely gratified with the attention with which the company had heard him. He was forced now to leave the chair, but in parting he earnestly begged to recommend the institution to their enlightened bounty, to commend what it had been able to do itself, which it still trusted to do, and what it hoped to inspire others to do. (Applause.)

The noble Earl then quitted the chair, which was next occupied by Lord Ebrington.

Sir R. HOWARD said, the noble Lord who had recently occupied the chair had performed his duty so well as to leave little or nothing for him (sir R. Howard) to do; but he wished to take that opportunity of impressing on the public through the press, that that society was different from other charitable societies having the same object; for, after looking into the financial part of the subject, his belief was that, whereas only £40,000 were now expended, when they had arrived at the expenditure of the £100,000 they would be very nearly in a position to pay 5 per cent.; and he congratulated the shareholders on having reached their present position. (Hear, hear.)

The Rev. J. HARRIS, as incumbent of the parish in which the building just erected stood, expressed his obligations to the society by whom it had been raised. He appreciated the great advantages and the good, social and moral, which such institutions were likely to confer, especially in places of great destitution. (Hear, hear.) He acknowledged the very benevolent and philanthropic conduct of the gentlemen who had promoted these undertakings; and he entertained no doubt whatever that their most sanguine hopes would be crowned with success. He knew the state of the suffering poor, and he thought he but expressed their feelings of thankfulness, and their desire to avail themselves of the opportunity so kindly placed within their reach. (Hear, hear.) He hailed with satisfaction the operation of this institution within his district, and, so far as his humble influence went, he should be most rejoiced to be instrumental in forwarding the wishes of the society. (Cheers.)

Mr. C. COCHRANE thought that the other society, which had erected buildings in George-street, Bloomsbury, had been referred to under some misapprehension. It was formed for the same purpose as the present society, to improve the dwellings of the people; and though it was true that it effected its objects by raising money through voluntary contributions, its end was to prove to the public that, if they chose to erect proper buildings for the working-classes, they would give dividends to such as subscribed the money. (Hear.) It was possible, also, to take old houses and fit them up as substantially as the present dwelling, but with less cost, so as to give a profit of 10, 20, or 30 per cent. It was necessary that something comprehensive should be done for the improvement of the dwellings of the poorer classes, for he knew instances in St. Giles's of seventeen persons and upwards lying in considerably less space than the lion in the Zoological Gardens was allowed. Let, then, the meeting pass a resolution, declaring that this was not a fit situation for human beings to be placed in, and that it was a duty to have the dwellings of the poorer people improved through the instrumentality of an Act of Parliament. He did not believe that the present society, or half a dozen societies like it, could erect sufficient dwellings for all the working people.

Lord EBRINGTON expressed a hope, that the meeting would not be misled into the belief that Government and Parliament could do everything. (Hear, hear.) Many things, no doubt, they could properly interfere to effect, such as the supply of water to towns, the cleansing of towns, the drainage and removal of nuisances, which were public, and not merely private concerns. But what was to prevent the erection, in a few years, of sufficient number of proper dwellings, through investment of capital by the community at large? Suppose the feeling was so general as to produce its effect on Parliament, what was to prevent individuals doing themselves the work instead of calling on Parliament? (Hear, hear.) What they had met that day for was to induce the wealthy capitalist to provide fit and decent houses for the working classes; and they did not seek to carry out the objects of the institution through charity (which would not grapple with the evil) nor did the industrious classes, who only asked for justice. (Applause.) They had gone to Government and asked for privileges conceded to certain institutions—some limitation of the liability of shareholders, and in return they were quite willing to say, that they would for ever debar themselves from taking large profits from the undertaking. He hoped builders hereafter, not shackled by the trammels the society had imposed on itself, would make larger profits than 5 per cent., otherwise active men of business could not be expected to give up their time and capital for such a return. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. S. SMITH confirmed what had fallen from the noble chairman by observing, that those who, from the first, laboured to establish this institution, never imagined that they could supply the wants of the poor for better habitations; but they hoped to be able to show, that it was possible to provide the poor with better houses than they now had, at no greater cost. (Hear, hear.) They went to Government, and asked them to strengthen their hands to make the experiment; and they believed that it had been completely successful. (Hear.) The enlightened and benevolent nobleman who occupied the chair at the beginning of this meeting, had called their attention to the report he (Dr. Smith) made at the last meeting, relative to the gratifying result of the experience of their first building in Pancras-road. He thought that it would be found that another year's experience would be equally gratifying, and up to the present time that establishment had passed through its trial

most triumphantly. (Hear, hear.) He owned that, as far as his own impressions and convictions went, he had always been desirous that their small means should be applied to the extension of the dwellings for families, rather than to the multiplication of lodging-houses for single men, for the next generation, as well as the present, would suffer when the children were brought up in unhealthy dwellings. (Hear, hear.) Still the young man, the industrious artizan, perhaps a stranger in London, and away from all his relations and friends, stood, it must be owned, in need of such an establishment as that provided for him by the society. 234 single men would not always remain single; but if any thoughts of changing their condition should enter into their hearts, he hoped they would not listen to them until the society's buildings for families in that quarter were ready. (Hear, and laughter.) In the meantime, in those comfortable chambers which were now provided for them, they might be educated for husbands, and learn to appreciate what was associated in the English mind with the term "comfort." (Hear.) Without comfort there could be no real home, and without a real home the domestic affections and enjoyments could have no place. (Applause.) In these few words was contained the history of the influence of the character of the house upon the character of its inmates; and, therefore, he had always strongly felt that in their efforts to improve the health of the people they were laying the foundation for their intellectual and moral improvement. (Applause.) It was quite impossible to realize the higher, without first of all securing the lower result. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. BOWLEY, of Gloucester, observed that he and others were trying to establish a branch society of this sort in that city, but he repudiated the idea of charity in these matters. He believed it was an affair of political expediency, and if they did not trouble themselves about the state of the poor, the state of the poor would very much trouble them. (Hear, hear.) They all knew that Parliament could not do all things, but all that was wanted was for Parliament to remove some of the legal obstacles in the way of these institutions. (Hear, hear.) A friend of his had bought 18 acres of land adjoining the city of Gloucester, and it was proposed to divide the land into small portions, and on each of these to build comfortable lodgings, containing not less than two living and three sleeping rooms. It was supposed that these cottages, with a good garden to each, could be built and let for £12 a-year. The tenant, besides, would have this advantage—that if he paid that rent for 14 years, he would then become the possessor of the cottage entirely, as the rent at that time would cover the interest and the price of the freehold at cost price. With the money another cottage would be built for some one else; and thus the building of cottages would go on whilst the population increased. (Hear, hear.) That was the plan in contemplation, and it was hoped the Government would assist it by passing some short clause aiding the present Building Act; or, if the object could be accomplished by the parties incorporating themselves with that society, which had effected much good in showing what could be done, they should be glad to do so.

Lord EBRINGTON threw out a hint that the trustees of charitable funds might effect a double good object by investing the money in self-supporting institutions like the present. They would still be able to receive the interest, and to apply it to the maintenance of a school, or such purpose as it might be destined for, while with the principal they would be providing comfortable dwellings for the working classes. (Hear, hear.) His Lordship then announced that the buildings would continue open for view, that they would be ready for occupation in ten days or a fortnight, and that cards of particulars would be distributed about the neighbourhood.

The meeting then gradually separated.